



**An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht**

**Appointment to the Board of the Abbey Theatre
Closing Date: Midnight on 28th September 2018**

The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is seeking to appoint suitably qualified candidate as a Member of the Board of the Abbey Theatre. Interested candidates should ensure they meet the criteria under section 3 below, and should email a current curriculum vitae, along with a cover letter outlining the specific expertise they would bring to this role, to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht at: artsunit@chq.gov.ie.

Shortlisting on the basis of written applications will apply.

Membership of State Boards

Although the Abbey Theatre is not a State Board, it has taken the decision to formally adopt the contents of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, in order to ensure adherence to best practice.

High standards of corporate governance in all State Agencies, whether in the commercial or non-commercial sphere, are critical to ensuring a positive contribution to the State's overall social and economic development.

Members of State Boards are appointed to act on behalf of the citizen to oversee the running of the affairs of state bodies. State bodies must serve the interests of the taxpayer, pursue value for money in their endeavours (including managing risk appropriately), and act transparently as public entities. Members of State Boards, and the relevant management team, are accountable for the proper management of the organisation.

Board members should act on a fully informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, and in the best interest of the State body, subject to the objectives set by Government.

The [Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016](#) (the Code) provides a framework for the application of best practice in corporate governance by both commercial and non-commercial State bodies.

In order to be an effective contributor on a State Board it is recommended that members should:

- bring independent and objective scrutiny to the oversight of the organisation;
- be prepared to be challenging when necessary while being supportive to the delivery of organisational strategy and objectives;
- be equipped to offer considered advice on the basis of sound judgement and experience;
- be prepared to make a time commitment to their work commensurate with their role.

Entity: Abbey Theatre

1. **Location:** Meetings will be in Dublin.
2. **Number of Vacancies:** 1
3. **Remuneration:** No fees payable. Travel and Subsistence are payable at the appropriate civil service rate.
4. **Time Requirements:** Typically, six Board meetings and six Audit and Risk Committee meetings per year.

1. Background

The Abbey Theatre is Ireland's National Theatre. Inspired by the revolutionary ideals of its founders and its rich canon of Irish dramatic writing, the Abbey Theatre's mission is to imaginatively engage with all of Irish society through the production of ambitious, courageous and new theatre in all its forms. The Abbey Theatre commits to lead in the telling of the whole Irish story, in English and in Irish, and affirms that it is a theatre for the entire island of Ireland and for all its people. In every endeavour, the Abbey Theatre promotes inclusiveness, diversity and equality.

Over the years, the Abbey Theatre has premiered the work of major Irish playwrights such as J.M. Synge, Sean O'Casey and Teresa Deevy, as well as contemporary classics from Sebastian Barry, Marina Carr, Brian Friel, Thomas Kilroy, Frank McGuinness, Tom Murphy and Mark O'Rowe. In recent years Irish and international audiences have enjoyed the plays of a new generation of playwrights: Stacey Gregg, Nancy Harris, David Ireland, Owen McCafferty, Phillip McMahon, Elaine Murphy, Michael West and Carmel Winters.

The artistic policy of the theatre incorporates the following ambitions:

- To invest in and promote new Irish writers and artists
- To produce an annual programme of diverse, engaging, innovative Irish and international theatre
- To attract and engage a wide audience and provide compelling experiences that inspire them to return, and
- To create a dynamic working environment which delivers world best practice across our business

To secure the long-term future of the organisation, the Abbey Theatre is currently investigating the feasibility of a major capital redevelopment on the site of the existing building.

More information can be found on the Abbey Theatre's website:

<https://www.abbeytheatre.ie/about/history/>

2. Functions of the Board

The Board is responsible for setting the broad strategy and policies for the Theatre. It is responsible for the system of internal financial control and for putting in place processes and procedures for ensuring that the system is effective.

Matters reserved for the Board include:

1. Significant acquisitions, disposals, and retirements of assets of the company. This applies to assets with values of €125,000 [excluding Value Added Tax(VAT)] or more;
2. Approval of terms of major contracts. Applies to contracts worth €125,000 [excluding VAT] or more;
3. Major investments and capital projects where the value is €125,000 [excluding VAT] or more;
4. Delegated authority levels, treasury policy and risk management;
5. Policy on determination of remuneration of senior management;
6. Approval of annual budgets, corporate and strategic plans;
7. Production of annual reports and accounts;
8. Appointment, remuneration and assessment of the performance of the Chief Executives (Theatre Directors);
9. Significant amendments to the pension of the Chief Executives and staff;
10. Succession planning for the Chief Executives;
11. Approval in advance of engagement in novel or contentious acts or in advance of the commitment of funds to novel or contentious purposes.

The Board's policy is to follow the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies in those areas where it is relevant to the Theatre. The Board is assisted in the discharge of its responsibilities by a number of sub-committees which include Audit & Risk, Development, and Site Redevelopment. Depending on the successful candidate's specific area of expertise, they may be requested to sit on one or more of these sub-committees.

3. Person Specification

The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is seeking to appoint a suitably qualified candidate of the Abbey Board. The Minister welcomes applications representative of the diversity of the Irish population, particularly reflecting gender, geography and cultural interests.

Expressions of interest are invited from applicants who consider they possess the following experience and skills:

- Experience as a senior executive or Board member of a medium to large organisation with responsibility for accounting, and/or audit and/or financial management, or the provision of professional services in these areas;
- Membership of a recognised accountancy body;
- Experience on the Board of an organisation which is highly dependent on fundraising for the delivery of its mission, goals and objectives and, in particular, playing an active role in support of the organisation's fundraising objectives;
- Experience of an organisation dealing with major capital investment projects.

In addition to this experience, it is desirable that applicants possess:

- Experience through previous membership of an Audit & Risk Committee;
- Knowledge of the environment and the market place in which the Abbey Theatre operates;
- Understanding of what is best practice for the industry in terms of safety, health and welfare at work, data protection, asset protection, compliance with legislation, compliance with tax obligations etc.;
- The ability to act independently and to arrive at an opinion about important matters and be prepared to use external sources to verify information upon which he/she will rely in coming to an opinion on a matter;
- The ability to assess and hold management accountable for performance – not just financial performance but also for performance on achieving the Abbey Theatre's strategic objectives;
- The ability to communicate effectively, work as part of a team and act as a strong advocate for the Abbey Theatre's strategic direction, vision and mission.

Applicants with previous experience in the following areas are especially welcome to apply:

- Identifying and cultivating prospective donors and connections, nationally and internationally
- Donor Relations.

4. Term of Appointment

- There are no fees payable for this position.
- In line with best practice, the term of appointment is 3 years, and successful candidates may serve a maximum of two terms of 3 years.
- There will be a formal Induction Programme for the successful candidate.

5. Submitting your Expression of Interest

Your submission should be made by email to artsunit@chg.gov.ie together with your **Curriculum Vitae** and a **cover letter** outlining, with reference to criteria at 3 above, the specific expertise you would bring to the role of a member.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please take care when submitting your expression of interest. As the Assessment Panel will generally make its recommendation(s) based on consideration of the documentation which you submit, it is most important that you *ensure your cover letter (and supporting CV) clearly specifies how your particular background and experience meets the requirements of the Board position specified in this booklet.*

This will help ensure that the Assessment Panel is as informed as possible as to the basis for your candidature and why you believe you are a person who could potentially be appointed to this Board.

6. Appointments Process

An Assessment Panel will be convened by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to consider and assess the expressions of interest received.

The panel will:

- review and discuss the expressions of interest received against the specific appointment criteria for the role, as advertised in this Information Booklet;
- assess potential candidates further once they meet the specified appointment criteria by undertaking any or all of the following steps:
 - Consideration of the written applications; and/or
 - Meeting/conference call; and/or
 - Referee checks; and/or
 - Any other selection or verification method deemed appropriate (this may include the Department requiring statutory declarations from shortlisted applicants as to the bona fides of the qualifications and experience contained in their applications).
- arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates to be sent forward for consideration by the

Minister.

If you have any questions regarding the application process please email artsunit@chq.gov.ie.

7. Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 2014, applications will be treated in strict confidence. All enquires, applications and all aspects of the proceedings are treated as strictly confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside those directly involved in that aspect of the process. Certain items of information, not specific to any individual, are extracted from computer records for general statistical purposes.

8. Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018

Please note that your cover letter and curriculum vitae will be forwarded to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and may be retained for up to one year.

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy and employs appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect your information from unauthorised access. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will not process your personal data for any purpose other than that for which they were collected. Personal data may be exchanged with other Government Departments, local authorities, agencies under the aegis of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, or other public bodies, in certain circumstances where this is provided for by law. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will only retain your personal data for as long as it is necessary for the purposes for which they were collected and subsequently processed. When the business need to retain this information has expired, it will be examined with a view to destroying the personal data as soon as possible, and in line with Department policy. Further information on Data Protection can be found on the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht website at: <https://www.chq.gov.ie/help/legal-notice/data-protection/>